

[Mrs. George W. Jones]

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FOLKLORE

Wm. V. Ervin, P. W.

McLennan County,

District 8.

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Consultant - Mrs. George W. Jones, 1801 Colcord Avenue, Waco, Texas. [???

"I was born in McLennan county in 1860, and have lived in the county all my life. My father was born in Missouri. He came to Texas in 1846, when he was a boy about fifteen years old. It was under peculiar circumstances that my father came to Texas. His mother, my grandmother, had died, and grandfather married again. My father, whose name was David McFadden, was plowing in the field when his older brother, my Uncle John McFadden, came to my father and told him that grandfather had married again. My father didn't want grandfather to marry again, he didn't like the woman; so he just took the mule from the plow and got on it and started for Texas without even going back to the house. He fell in with a family, or group of people who were coming to Texas, and they brought him along with him. They could see that he was just a boy, and I guess that is why they took him along with them.

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"When they got to Texas an army was being raised to fight Mexico, and my father joined it. He was large for his age, and so they let him join. He got down to Austin and San Antonio, but didn't get into Mexico.

"After that war was over he finally became a Texas ranger and Indian fighter. He was with Bigfoot Wallace in the Indian fighting. He and Wallace and the men they were with were following a band of Indians in which was one with big feet. At least the white men often footprints in the trail of the Indians which were much bigger than the other footprints, and they thought it must be a big Indian which was making them. At last they caught up with the Indians and had a fight with them, and defeated them. During the fight my father heard Wallace yelling, "I've got the bigfoot Indian!" When the fight was over the men went and looked at Wallace's Indian, which Wallace

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"While we were living about twenty miles from Waco, on Hog Creek, my father captured the last Indian in this part of the country. It was long after the Indians had quit making raids down this far, although they still raided and stole horses and killed settlers in Comanche, Hamilton and Brown counties, and I always had a horror then when I was a little girl of those counties because of the stories of Indian depreciations we would hear then, and I still don't feel any desire to go to those counties. It was about 1865 when my father caught the Indian. One cold, moonlight night my father went out to the corral to turn loose some horses, and when he opened the gate they all ran out but one horse, and it stood near the barn, with its head and neck in the shadow of the barn. He thought it was one of his horses, and wondered why it didn't run out with the others. He went up to it and put his hand on its neck and ran his hand up along the neck toward the head, and felt a rope around the pony's neck. He ran his hand along the rope and touched the Indian, and the Indian yelled, "Indian! Comanche?" My father saw him then, as the Indian was standing in the shadow of the barn. My father grabbed him, but the Indian didn't make any resistance. My father searched him, and didn't find anything on him in the way of a weapon, not even

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a pocket knife. Father brought the Indian into the house. He was a young Indian, and he was cold and about half-starved. My father tried to talk to him in some Indian language he knew, but the Indian couldn't understand. All he could do was point to the west and indicate he came from that way. My father wanted to go and get the neighbors and all take council and see what ought to be done as my father thought there might be other Indians

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"The next morning father called the neighbors in, and they were afraid there were other Indians around, but they hadn't seen any, and the Indian father had caught said he was the only one. They couldn't, [?] much out of him but that and that he came from the west. They had no idea what he was doing there except that he had got lost from a raiding party in the country further west and had wandered down into our part of the country. We never did know for sure where he came from, and he was always a mystery to us. One of the men who came to our home that morning said he would take the Indian to his place and take care of him to work for him, and the Indian went with him, but he left the man after two or three years because the man wasn't kind to him. That was the last wild Indian ever seen or heard of in this country.

"My father was in the Dove Creek fight, and marched from Waco with some of the Indian fighters. One night they marched all night. It was very cold weather and there was snow on the ground, and the men suffered a lot from the cold, especially the wounded.

"My father settled here when there was hardly any Waco here, and lived in this county the rest of his life. I knew Neil McLennan, the man for whom the county was named. He was one of the finest men I ever knew.